

# IOWAccess Project 14 Meeting

## August 3, 1998, 1:30 p.m.

### ISAC Conference Room

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#### Present:

Harold Templeman, Co-lead  
Deb Westvold, Co-lead  
Larry Allen  
Judy Dierenfeld  
Joan Discher  
Suzanne Fross  
Steve Kerber  
Brad Leckrone  
Joel Weichman  
Craig Wood

#### Staff:

Arlinda McKeen  
Linda Plazak

Harold Templeman reviewed the agenda to focus the meeting on the demonstration and discussion of evaluation criteria.

#### *Evaluation of the System*

Larry Allen passed out a set of proposed evaluation points relating to the data warehouse. (See attached.) These evaluation criteria were developed to answer two primary questions:

1. Is the project doing what we intended it to do?
2. Is it as worthwhile as we anticipated?

Allen commented from his perspective the system doesn't encompass as much geographically as hoped. There also had been hope for some additional kinds of data to be included that we were not able to bring in.

The original scope of the project was modified to fit the budget that was allocated to the project by ITS. The data that is not part of the system is the expenditure data. This data would maximize the value of the system, but it was not possible to include expenditure data in this phase of the project. Part of the value is the new ability of DHS and county data systems to talk to one another. The expandability of this system will allow other data systems to be brought in as well as additional counties to use the system.

Plazak commented that there is great value in the project's ability to get better information moved around quicker. She reminded the team this is a pilot project. When the team presents to the steering committee, she suggested emphasis on how it was

modified to be reasonable and doable within the budget, as well as its value and expandability.

Plazak reviewed the components of the final project report that will be required from each of the IOWAccess project teams. The first draft of the report is due September 17. It requires evaluation criteria and methodology to be detailed. The evaluation results are due December 1.

In terms of evaluation methodology, we will get at some through the testing. We had two counties thoroughly testing the system with DHS. The pilot counties recognize they are investing their time in a future system that will be of benefit to counties, DHS, and state and local policy makers. Leckrone and Mireles report the system is working smoothly to transfer data.

As the problems are worked out, the other pilot counties need to participate in testing the system. It is time now for the other counties to begin to help testing the system. Fross explained she has placed three dummy cases out in the system to test the release process and sharing the data in files that contain data and some that contain no data. That data is getting to the server and the counties are able to access it as well.

Another good test is to get a non-CoMIS county like Linn County to test it. A text file could be created to send the data into CoMIS so there would not be a need to re-program the mainframe. Westvold will contact Polk County to see if they would be interested in testing the system.

That all counties do not use CoMIS is a barrier in the effort to sharing data. The barrier is to get those counties to write a procedure to get data transferred into CoMIS. Getting the rest of the pilot counties loaded and part of the testing and evaluation will be the next step.

Part of the evaluation needs to ask questions about how the county side of the software works. Questions might include: Were they able to get the system to work? Was it hard to use? Was it useful? What needs to happen to make it useful or more useful?

Fross will contact the other pilot counties to get their participation in the testing and evaluation.

The contractor has spent some time training Fross on the SQL part of the system. They have fulfilled at least 95% of the contract obligations. If Fross had been part of the project from the beginning, some of the training would not be needed. The contractor has not yet fulfilled the obligation for aggregate reports. There were reports selected at some of the prototyping meetings. McGladrey planned to set up the format for aggregate reports. These are basically the same kind of demographic reports on a statewide basis that are now available on a county basis.

Templeman and Westvold will meet with the contractor to pursue developing aggregate report formats that include MMIS and institutional system data, as well as data from the

warehouse. It was determined early that users should be able to build their own reports. Counties want statewide reports to come back to them after they send in the individual county information. The reports that are most important are those based on expenditures, and those data aren't part of the system now. Service data and payment data will be much more valuable to the CPCs and other users of aggregate data, and will motivate people to bring their counties into the system.

Barriers to bringing other data systems into this project include the human aspects and that some systems claim their data is better so they do not want to blend that data with data they perceive is not as good. Another barrier is that data systems are built differently, making bringing them together more difficult.

It was suggested that we will want data aggregated by category of disability when that data is pulled in from other sources. A future need includes being able to track consumers with multiple diagnoses. The project needs to address the foundational issue of what data is being gathered. Some of the data needed isn't being gathered at all. Substance abuse brings an additional set of issues.

Confidentiality issues make bringing databases together more difficult. For substance abuse consumers, federal law doesn't allow use of SSN as the identifier so another key field would need to be determined.

### *Final Report Development*

Project co-leads will draft the final report based on the discussions at team meetings. This draft will be distributed to the team for review and comments. Team members were asked to consider the final report format and e-mail any bulleted comments to Westvold and Templeman for inclusion in the draft.

### *Demonstration*

Suzanne Fross provided a demonstration of the system, showing both the county user perspective and the DHS data warehouse perspective. She illustrated the ease of use on the county side, which was supported by Leckrone. The DHS "system administrator" is responsible to maintain the system, and there are a number of procedures that may need to be automated.

One of the issues to be resolved is that of obtaining a release of information from the consumer. There are both legal issues and procedural issues to consider.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

